


# State Sees Major Increase in High School Students Taking College Courses

*Governor has made dual enrollment classes a priority in push to better prepare youth for college and career*

**Wilmington, DE** – With the Governor and Department of Education supporting more opportunities for high schoolers to take college-level classes before graduation, the state released data today showing that the number of students participating in “dual-enrollment” courses has more than doubled in the past year. This fall, more than 1500 high school students are taking classes that can count toward high school graduation and college credits, up from about 600 in the 2013-14 school year. They receive instruction either on a college campus or from a teacher who has received special accreditation from one of the state’s higher education institutions. 

“This increase represents a better opportunity for hundreds of Delaware juniors and seniors to ensure they are well-prepared to continue their education after graduation,” **said Governor Markell**. “Recognizing that the vast majority of good-paying jobs require some education or training beyond schools, we have seen tremendous progress in our state’s efforts to increase access to college. Dual-enrollment makes it more likely that students will succeed when they get there or in any other path they pursue.”

This semester, 25 high schools across the state are offering more than 100 dual-enrollment courses, with both the total number of courses and schools doubling from last school year. Dual enrollment is different from Advanced Placement courses, which prepare students for an exam, through which they can earn college credit if they receive a high enough score. The

number of students taking an AP test has also more than doubled over the past decade.

“Educators and administrators across our state are working hard to teach students the most important skills they need to reach their potential and pursue their dreams,” **said Education Secretary Mark Murphy**. “School and district efforts to embrace dual enrollment are another step toward all of our young people graduating high school ready for college or career.”


In his State of the State address last January, Markell announced an initiative to ensure all high school seniors have access to a college-level class, regardless of their financial circumstances. The state’s budget for this year includes funding for this effort and, thus far, the Department of Education has spent \$66,000 to support 206 of these students. Districts and the state’s colleges and universities are also investing in the cost of dual enrollment. Wilmington University, Delaware Tech, the University of Delaware, and Delaware State University all offer dual enrollment programs.

“Our dual enrollment partnerships are providing exciting ways for students to be involved in high rigor coursework and get a jump start on their post-secondary careers,” **said Sam Golder, director of secondary schools for the Red Clay Consolidated School District**, where the number of dual-enrollment students increased from zero to 97 in the past year across Dickinson, DuPont, and McKean High Schools.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, students who complete college credit while in high school require less remediation, have higher Grade Point Averages, and earn more credits in college.

Offering a true college experience is key to preparing students for a post-secondary education, so they understand the expectations that come with that,” **said Delmar Principal Ashley Giska**, whose school increased dual enrollment

participation from 68 to more than 80 and added two courses this year. “By being able to do so within our building and with our faculty, we are excited about the opportunities we can provide.”

Markell planned to visit Howard High School of Technology Wednesday afternoon to speak with Principal Stanley Spoor and students in one of the state’s new dual enrollment courses. Howard, part of the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District, entered into a partnership with Wilmington University this year for students at Howard High School of Technology and at Delcastle Technical High School. The pilot program allows students to take a college level course, in their school, taught by one of the school’s teachers who has earned certification as an adjunct instructor at WilmU. At Howard and DelCastle, 156 students are participating in dual  enrollment this year, compared to about 25 last year.

“This opportunity allows students to build confidence in their own ability to handle college-level work and enables them to get a head start by earning valuable course credits at no cost to them,” **said Spoor**. “We are pleased to have a chance to take part in this pilot program and to receive funding from the state for such a worthwhile initiative.

The Department of Education has worked with districts to identify college-ready students who would benefit from taking a dual enrollment course through one of our state’s higher education institutions. By focusing on general education courses such as math, English, history, and science, students can receive college credit that is highly transferrable. Students can then enroll in college having accumulated credits without any financial burden, thus making college more affordable and increasing the likelihood they will graduate on time.

The dual-enrollment increase complements a partnership that [the state has launched with the College Board](#) to send all

college-ready seniors application and financial aid resources, including application fee waivers to eligible students. [Students then receive help in school filling out their applications and financial aid forms.](#) Last year, for the first time, every college-ready senior applied to college and nearly all reported that they planned to enroll.